Bristol. October 1st – 1846

My dear Mr. May.

The speedy departure of the Packet, & much demand upon my time in the letter writing way, warn me not to delay beginning a communication to you, or I shall be able to address you but briefly. – indeed brief I must be, under any circumstances, for the subjects I should like to touch are wide & numerous.

And first, I must refer to your Bazaar, as our rooms are now filled with things for it, & Mrs. Mitchell is come from London to help my daughter in her multiplied arrangements. Our drawing-room is quite unequal to hold the annual exhibition in, & a large room in an untenanted house of Mr. Carpenter's is to be used. Complain, however, we must not, both because you will be the gainers, & we have brought much of the additional employment upon ourselves, by the wide distribution of my tract. It is indeed gratifying to me to have demonstrable evidence of ~~the~~ some of the extent in which this little publication has spread information & excited an active interest in your cause. Few, I believe, of the new persons added to my list of receivers for the Fair, have been idle: – some, most industrious – The Bridgwater

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friends, instead of sending their contributions
to Bristol, have enough I hear, for an exhi-
bition ~~of~~ in their town, & mean to forward a box
of their own. At the distant, & important
town of Leeds, I am much pleased to hear
that the lady-receivers are very active in
preparing articles for you. I do not mean
however, to take more credit than is my
due; the visit of Messrs. Garrison & Douglass
to Bristol, has greatly stimulated the
A. S. zeal of their neighbourhood.

The commendation of the "Brief Notice"
in the Liberator, your opinion, (if I am not
mistaken,) & Mr. Garrison's, have induced
me to send as a contribution to the Bazaar
100 copies of the tract, covered &c, so as to
give them a decent, & perhaps saleable
appearance. I have put my name on the
cover also, as an opinion has been expressed
by my friends that it would not, (though I once
thought it might) diminish the interest
felt in its perusal. The titles affixed, are of
no real value: they may show that the writer
is not utterly unknown in his native ~~place.~~
country. The initials F. L. S., as perhaps you
know, signify "Fellow of the Linnean Society,"
a highly respectable scientific Association;
the *most* distinguished" *Society* title in this

country, i.e. F.R.S. Fel. of the Royal Socy.

I certainly should be glad if the tract may obtain some circulation among those who have not joined the Abolitionists, especially the Unitarian clergymen. The deficiencies and allowances for the honesty of the convictions of opponents, which render it unsatisfactory to thorough Abolitionists, may be the means of not discouraging its perusal with those who need to be informed & aroused. That I have not spoken too mildly & charitably, with the object I had in view, (the enlightening of persons here who would not attend to a strong, one sided, party statement,) I have been convinced by almost daily evidence. I trust the copies I send out will be useful to you, for the edition is getting low, & they could be serviceably employed at home. May I ask you to appropriate to yourself 25 of the copies sent, if you are aware of any particular or modes of efficiently employing them?

I know not if you see our "Christian Reformer", edited by Mr. R. Brooke Aspland son of its ~~late~~ former Editor, the late Mr. A. of Hackney? Presuming that it is seen by the leading Unitarian writers in Boston, who I ~~f~~ believe are Abolitionists — "in the abstract", I have great satisfaction in seeing in the No. for this month, the first part of an article on Amn. Slavery. —

The C.R. has been very shy on this topic. Mr. Aspland Sen.r was a decided favourer of those Am. Ministers who condemned the Abolitn movement. The monthly summary of American intelligence contained many a hit at the A.S. party extracted from your publications: neither father nor son would sign the Unit. Address from this country — But of late Mr. B. Aspland has evinced more enlightened opinions, & ~~has~~ expressed in the C.R. his congratulations on the success of the original Address. It is therefore very pleasant to me to see the manner he is now speaking out. My "Misslhotie" furnishes a text for the article. I have had much communication with Mr. B. Aspland on the subject He is now in Bristol, (he was formerly colleague with Dr Carpenter at our chapel) having been invited to preach an annual Domestic Mission sermon: ~~I have~~ He has had of me 8 copies of Fr. Ds. Narrative, & 20 of the B. Notice for a Tract Soc.y If you see the newspaper I refer to in the C. Reformer, be assured, that whatever share you may suspect me of having had in its appearance, I am perfectly innocent of the compliments paid to the tract & the writer

On the subject of the late Evangelical Allian
I can say no more than you will hear from

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other quarters. The meeting in Exeter Hall attended by Messrs. Garrison, Thompson & Douglass to review the proceedings of this worthy body, was an effective one — On the 7th inst. we have an A.S. meeting in Bristol for the same purpose, when Geo. Thompson comes to lead the attack. A letter to beg him to take up his quarters at my house, is now lying, just written, on the desk I am writing on.

To one subject I cannot advert without some regret: it is Mr. Garrison's course of action on this side of the Atlantic. I think he is making a great blunder, & is pursuing a mistaken line. He seems to consider it necessary, for his credit *in America*, to meddle with all sorts of questions that divide the population of this country — "*Universal suffrage*," "the *rights of primogeniture*," "*the observance of the Sabbath*," "monarchical form of Government" &c, &c, are discussed in public & pronounced upon by him. Neither is going *out of his way* to make himself unpopular, & to much diminish his influence as an *Abolition Advocate*. Every man here is expected to have, and if called upon, to express his opinions upon any of these exciting subjects; but no sensible Englishman, who has some important moral or philanthropic object to accomplish, will, uncalled for, volunteer to proclaim publicly his convictions upon such matters. Were the middle & lower classes of this country the parties likely to do much for the Am: Abol: cause, there might be some use in courting their favour, even ~~whilst offending~~ ~~tho'~~ at the risk of offending higher circles. But these lower, & lower-middle classes have not sufficient personal interest in the subject to induce them to take it up warmly; & if they did, they would do you little or ~~harm~~ no good. It is not ~~the~~ kitchens & ~~the~~ workshops, that need Anti Slavery agitation for America's sake, but our drawing-rooms, ~~and~~ the salons ~~the~~ of the wealthy, & the libraries of the ~~[illegible]~~ learned. And were Mr G. to confine himself strictly to American Slavery, giving all the information he could, & abstaining from every other topic excepting such on which he wished for information, it is impossible to calculate the extent of valuable interest he would excite in the A-S. cause. Multitudes now, who fear of seeking his acquaintance, will shun him as a general Agitator to this ~~here~~ country I trust and believe, that his visit ~~hither~~ will advance the object he, & you & all of us have so much at heart; but I do deeply regret that Mr G.'s influence here will ~~be~~ fall so much short of what it might have been. Friend R. D. Webb, would probably not accord in my view, but I am sure I have more ample means of forming a judgment on this point than he has. I am fully acquainted with Mr Garrison's motive for coming forward on some of the subjects of contention in England, & I hope it may answer the purpose of ~~raising his~~ increasing his power of usefulness in the U.S. — it is well tho' it should diminish it with us. Henry Vincent, was by no means a choice person for Mr. G. to have fraternized with publicly, unless some point of human feeling or principle, demanded it.

As nothing is likely to diminish the high esteem & regard I feel for Mr. G. & which I expressed in my last letter, ~~to you~~, I have no hesitation in speaking freely to *you* on these points. You must take my opinion only for what you think it is worth, but I can assure you mine is the type of the views of very many earnest, intelligent & calm-judging people:..

To make you comprehend more clearly in what manner I think Mr. G. is not managing his cause cleverly, I would adduce this as an example. In the National Hall in London, (not a very *choice* place for his appearing in) ~~many~~ he said that were it not for American Slavery, there would not, at this moment, have been a throne in Europe! Now *if* this were a true hypothesis, 49 people out of every 50 in this country would feel under great obligation to American Slavery, & would be very sorry to see its termination. ~~Now~~ I cannot then see the evidence, or the advantage to the best interests of the A.S. cause, of in Mr. G's ~~saying~~ stirring up

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3d a host of prejudices against him here from some fanciful notion of raising his reputation for moral courage in America.? *We* here need no evidence of his magnanimity, independence, & disinterested philanthropy, and if *you* in America ~~do~~ require it, you have not improved your opportunities of studying G's character.

Another evil too of a foreigner's intermeddling with English politics, is, the impossibility of his knowing the sort of persons with whom he must fraternize. People here are much influenced by the maxim, that "a Man is known by the *Company* he keeps." Now Mr Garrison's intimacy with, & laudation of *Henry Vincent* who has been in prison for some Chartist exploits, would be *sure* to detract from his power of serving the A.S. cause in England. I say nothing, for I know nothing, of Vincent's worth or worthlessness. I know he is only in favour with persons who have but little *power*, (even if they could be made feel the inclination,) to aid in abolishing American Slavery.

I doubt if Mr G. have had very good advisers as to his most judicious course in England. Certainly my observation of him & his proceedings appears to give me considerable

insight into the causes of the perpetual dissa-
tisfaction you have among members of your Societies
in Mass: Mr. W. C. Lukens's letter in the
Liberator of Aug. 21. seems to me a judicious one
and is not satisfactorily answered in the following
No. It would surprise you to know how
very many parties here, Quakers especially, are
opposed to Mr. Garrison. Nothing will induce Mr. Fry
(husband of the lady whose note to me you sent to the
Liberator formerly) to join our auxiliary A. S. League;
Mrs F.'s sentiments respect'g Mr. G. are unchanged,
& yet the family have just sent to our house
a beautiful assemblage of articles for the Fair
fancywork, ~~dried~~ arranged collections of dried
ferns & flowers, and I believe a poem to F.
Douglas by one of the sons is being printed. If I
have room I will inclose Mrs F's note to my
daughter. How such zeal in your cause must
not be damped by insisting that unless Mr. G.'s
or any other persons and views ~~must~~ be unconditio-
nally adopted, they might as well be considered pro-
slavery people. Already dissentions have taken
place in our new League Com: from the supposi-
tion that the pledge, or "principle" adopted by
the London League must be enunciated by us
— "that slavery under all conceivable cir-
cumstances is a heinous sin" &c — such
a declaration of opinion is thoroughly uncalled
for here, however much you may need it.
American slavery, we think a "heinous sin"
and are most desirous of cooperating with the

Mass. Abolitionists in getting rid of it: this I think ought to content the real friends of the slave on the other side of the Atlantic.

Douglass seems to be pursuing his course judiciously: occasionally he says something not quite acceptable, but on the whole he is very guarded, & from him stronger language & sentiments would be put up with than from a white advocate of emancipation. His lectures are widely extending a knowledge of the subject, and all parties in the A.S. field, are pleased with him. I am sorry however to find that at Leeds, to which place I before ~~i~~ inferred, the the Bazaar will Bazaar will be benefited by workers for ~~the~~ it, the Quaker influence against Garrison is so strong ~~there~~, that they have not been able to get up a meeting for either G. or D. to address. Yet Leeds is a most liberal place. It is very fortunate that Douglass will continue here till the spring

Do not be too sanguine about the new Anti Slavery League. as yet, it has no supporters likely to give it much weight. I am in full expectation of an open attack about it from the B & F. A.S. Socy. — a secret one has been going on I believe for some time. I trust however, it may eventually make a good stand.

We are in much concern here on account of the Gt. Britain which is stranded on the East coast of Ireland: a large number of the Members of the Evangl. Alliance from America were on board: happily no lives were lost. I have some shares in the ship.

My daughter begs her kind remembrance

Believe me my dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

J. B. Estlin.

I will not break in upon the 100 copies of the "Brief Notice" for the Bazaar, but send, addressed to Mrs Chapman for yours, 5 in a separate packet: the edges not being gilt is the only difference. I have subjoined a list of corrigenda, & have made all the alterations you suggested. You will also see some remarks of yours, & a similar corrective in the article in the C. Reformer.

I have prepared an account of F. Douglas's "Narrative" for the December No. of the C.R.

October 3rd.

On reviewing my letter I have no reason to alter any expressions I have used. You know that I ~~can~~ do not criticize Mr G's course here, with any but the friendliest feeling; & I would not speak of him to his opponents, as I do to you. I may too have taken a not sufficiently comprehensive view of the whole subject.

I do not hesitate to make one prophecy, the

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correctness of which I shall [illegible]ble to become confirmed or repeated. — it is that
Mr. G. will return home in greater sympathy with the Unitarians of this
country, than with any other religious class; — he will too regard them as less
sectarian than others.   He has, I suspect, been astonished at the amount of
odium cast upon us by all other religious bodies; — this alone would enlist the
sympathy of such a man as G. in our behalf.   If Mr. G., as far as I can learn as I know
~~[illegible]~~ his opinions, be not a "Unitn." I know not what Unitarianism is.

A decided American Church article, has just appeared in the "Christian
Witness", an orthodox dissenters' Magazine newspaper, accusing Garrison of a consistent effort
to destroy all religion; — quoting a passage of a "speech of his", or rather a "Resolution"
"lately adopted in N. York, on the 12th. May in the "Broadway Tabernacle" rejoicing in the
"present declining state of American religion". We know what is meant by
this Resolutn. but it will shock many here. The incredibility of the New League is
~~printed~~ insisted on, & the old B. & F. A-S-Socy. lauded: — the article probably comes
from the Broad Street A-S. Office

It is the remark of good judges, & quite accords with my own observation,
that Mr. G. has not yet the art of carrying with him the sympathy, & riveting
the attention of a British audience. Perhaps he do not aim particularly
at this? Douglas, has much more tact: indeed I was astonished at the
skill & judgment he showed in this important qualification of a public
speaker.   My daughter & a young lady staying with us, sent an amusing Preamble
& Resolution as from a public Meeting, according with an assertion of his that Slavery was so bad,
as to be insusceptible of abuse, & recommending that in future "no epithet be applied to it, & that
the term "hellish" be discontinued." Mr. G. received the Resoln. in the playful spirit in which they
were sent. The ladies here were delighted with him. —

~~G. Bancroft~~

~~G. Thompson's Speech on ...~~
~~" on ...~~

~~"Anti-Slavery Reporter"~~
~~of the Inquirer~~

~~J. G. Palfrey's pamphlet~~

W. L. G.'s
course
in England
on
other
topics

Arrd. 1st. Decr. Ship 1846.

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1846
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Revd. Samuel May,
Leicester
Massachusetts
U. States.

~~Sir. Gt. Britain~~

~~Article in C. Reform~~

~~Tract to the Fai~~

~~Garrison in Eng~~
~~Principle of the Leag~~

Garrison's view
of Eng. Unitarians

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